

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 H-02

PA-02 PRS-01 INR-07 CIAE-00 ACDA-10 SAM-01 AID-05

IGA-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /070 W
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P R 150448Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6473

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

DIRNSA WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSMACTHAI BANGKOK TH

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 13790

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, MILI, TH

SUBJ: U.S. MILITARY IN THAILAND

FOREIGN MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE

USIA PASS IEA

1. AFTER MAY 14 MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR, FOREIGN MINISTER
PHICHAI RATTAKUN TALKED WITH NEWSMEN. FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL
USIS TRANSLATION.

2. BEGIN TEXT

REPORTER: ON WHAT MATTER DID THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR COME
TO MEET YOU?

PHICHAI: THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR MADE AN APPOINTMENT TO
MEET ME. AS YOU ALREADY KNOW, HE HAD MADE CONTACT BEFORE THIS
GOVERNMENT HAD OBTAINED A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. AFTER IT OBTAINED
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A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FROM PARLIAMENT, THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR

MADE CONTACT AGAIN FOR A MEETING, AND I MADE AN APPOINTMENT TO MEET HIM TODAY. FIRST OF ALL, THE AMBASSADOR CAME TODAY AND EXPRESSED HIS CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, THEN HE CONGRATULATED ME PERSONNALLY. WE TALKED OF MATTERS IN GENERAL CONCERNING THE SITUATION OF OUR COUNTRY, THE SITUATION OUTSIDE OUR COUNTRY, THE WORLD SITUATION IN GENERAL, AND WE EXCHANGED VIEWS.

REPORTER: THERE IS A NEWS REPORT THAT NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE HELD AGAIN REGARDING TROOP WITHDRAWAL. WAS THAT SUBJECT MENTIONED?

PHICHA: AFTER TALKING OF MATTERS IN GENERAL, THE AMBASSADOR BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF RAMASUN. I INFORMED HIM THAT THIS GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY IMPLEMENTED BY THE FORMER GOVERNMENT, THAT IT ADHERES TO THE PRINCIPLE OF THE SEVEN-POINT PROPOSAL MADE BY THE FORMER GOVERNMENT. AFTER I HAD INFORMED THE AMBASSADOR OF THIS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY REGARDING RAMASUN, ASSERTING THAT WE ADHERE TO THE SEVEN-POINT PROPOSAL MADE BY THE FORMER GOVERNMENT, HE CONTINUED TALKING ON THAT ISSUE AND HE EXPRESSED NEW IDEAS, NEW VIEWS REGARDING RAMASUN. I CANNOT, HOWEVER, GIVE YOU ANY DETAILS AND DISCLOSE TODAY WHAT THOSE NEW IDEAS OR VIEWS ARE. THE ONLY INFORMATION I CAN GIVE YOU NOW IS THAT THE AMBASSADOR MADE A NEW PROPOSAL THAT IS OF INTEREST. I THEREFORE ASKED HIM TO GIVE IT TO ME IN THE FORM OF THE MEMORANDUM BECAUSE MAKING THE PROPOSAL ORALLY MIGHT MISS SOME DETAILS. THAT WAS WHY I ASKED HIM TO DRAFT IT IN THE FORM OF A MEMORANDUM AND TO GIVE IT TO ME NEXT WEEK.

REPORTER: DOES THAT MEAN THERE WILL BE SOME COMPROMISES OR THAT THERE WILL BE SOME CHANGES?

PHICHA: I HAVE INFORMED YOU ALREADY THAT THE AMBASSADOR MADE A PROPOSAL THAT HAD SEVERAL IDEAS OF INTEREST. BUT I INFORMED HIM AND I ALSO POINTED OUT THAT WE ADHERE FIRMLY TO THE SEVEN POINTS IN THE PROPOSAL MADE BY THE FORMER GOVERNMENT. THEREFORE, THIS CANNOT BE CALLED EITHER A COMPROMISE OR A NON-COMPROMISE BECAUSE I

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HAVE ASSERTED THROUGHOUT THAT WE ADHERE TO THE PRINCIPLES IN THOSE SEVEN CONDITIONS, THAT NO CHANGES CAN BE MADE.

REPORTER: ARE THERE ANY INDICATIONS ON HIS SIDE THAT THERE WILL BE ANY CHANGES?

PHICHA: AS I HAVE SAID ALREADY, THAT CONCERNS HIS IDEAS, WHICH I TOLD YOU ARE OF INTEREST.

REPORTER: DO THOSE NEW IDEAS HE SUGGESTED CONFLICT WITH OUR ORIGINAL PRINCIPLES?

PHICHA: THEY MUST NOT AND CANNOT CONFLICT BECAUSE I ADHERE FIRMLY TO THOSE PRINCIPLES. BUT I CANNOT GIVE YOU FURTHER DETAILS OR ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AT PRESENT BECAUSE I WISH HIM TO MAKE THE PROPOSAL AND IDEAS IN THE FORM OF A MEMORANDUM FOR ME TO STUDY CLEARLY FIRST.

REPORTER: WHEN WILL HE BE ABLE TO INFORM US?

PHICHA: I, TOO, AM AS ANXIOUS TO KNOW AS YOU ARE. AS SOON AS I HAVE THE MEMORANDUM, I WILL INFORM YOU.

REPORTER: DOES THIS PROPOSAL CONCERN VARIOUS AMERICAN PROJECTS IN THAILAND?

PHICHA: THE IDEAS HE PROPOSED ARE VERY WIDE AND COMPREHENSIVE. I DO NOT WISH TO DISCLOSE ANYTHING AT PRESENT BECAUSE ANYTHING I MIGHT SAY NOW WOULD CAUSE DIFFICULTIES WHEN I STUDY HIS MEMORANDUM. I CAN ONLY EMPHASIZE TO YOU AGAIN THAT I ADHERE FIRMLY TO THE PRINCIPLES IN THE SEVEN CONDITIONS PROPOSED ORIGINALLY.

REPORTER: WILL THE RAMASUN ISSUE ALSO INVOLVE UTAPAO, KO KHA AND CHIANG MAI?

PHICHA: EVERYTHING IS INVOLVED, NOT ONLY RAMASUN.

REPORTER: IN THAT CASE, SHOULD ANY PROGRESS BE MADE, WILL IT MEAN THAT AMERICA WILL GIVE IN TO US?

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PHICHA: DON'T CALL IT "GIVING IN" OR "NOT GIVING IN" BECAUSE IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WE ARE NEGOTIATING WITH HIM AS A FRIEND OF OURS, THEREFORE NEGOTIATIONS OR CONVERSATIONS HELD ARE IN A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE.

REPORTER: WHY AVOID ANSWERING QUESTIONS?

PHICHA: THAT WAS NOT REALLY ANSWERING A QUESTION BECAUSE SUFFICIENT ANSWERS HAVE BEEN GIVEN FOR THE TIME BEING. THAT STATEMENT I MADE WAS TO MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THE ATMOSPHERE DURING NEGOTIATIONS IS GOOD,

REPORTER: IS THERE A TENDENCY FOR AGREEMENT TO BE REACHED BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES IN OUR SEVEN CONDITIONS?

PHICHA: I ADHERE FIRMLY TO THE PRINCIPLES IN THOSE SEVEN CONDITIONS.

REPORTER: SUPPOSE WE CONSIDER THE NEW PROPOSAL HE HAS MADE, AND IF WE CONSIDER IT GOOD AND THAT IT DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH OUR ORIGINAL CONDITIONS, WILL MOVES FOR COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL WITHIN JULY 20 HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED NULL AND VOID?

PHICHA: NOT AT ALL. MOVES FOR THEM TO WITHDRAW TECHNICIANS, ETC., ARE SPECIFIED IN OUR SEVEN CONDITIONS.

REPORTER: EVEN SHOULD THE SEVEN CONDITIONS BE AGREED TO THEY COULD NOT REMAIN HERE. BUT MIGHT IT NOT BE IN SOME OTHER FORM?

PHICHA: I WISH HIM TO WRITE HIS NEW IDEAS IN THE FORM OF A MEMORANDUM FIRST BECAUSE IN ANY ACTION TAKEN I WISH TO HAVE PROOF IN WRITING.

REPORTER: WHILE THERE IS BARGAINING AT PRESENT, WILL PERFORMANCE OF WORK AT RAMASUN CAMP BE CARRIED ON AGAIN, OR WON'T WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN SERVICEMEN FROM RAMASUN BE DISCONTINUED?

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PHICHA: THAT'S NOT TRUE, NOT AT ALL TRUE. THAT IS TOTAL MISUNDERSTANDING. THE DISMANTLING OF VARIOUS EQUIPMENT IS PROGRAMMED, AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF THEIR TECHNICIANS, ETC., HAS TO BE CARRIED ON IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR PROGRAM BECAUSE THERE IS A DEADLINE.

REPORTER: BUT MIGHT NOT THERE BE CHANGES WHILE NEGOTIATIONS ARE STILL GOING ON? MIGHT NOT EVERYTHING COME TO A STANDSTILL TEMPORARILY?

PHICHA: THERE CAN BE NO STANDSTILL BECAUSE EVERYTHING THAT HAS TO BE DONE IS PLANNED STEP BY STEP. THEY HAVE FIXED PLANS ON HOW EVERYTHING MUST BE WITHDRAWN.

REPORTER: THEN DOES THAT MEAN THAT SOMETHING NEW MIGHT OCCUR?

PHICHA: IT WOULD NOT BE PROPER FOR ME TO SAY ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT WE HAD A CONVERSATION AND THERE WERE POINTS AT ISSUE OF INTEREST.

REPORTER: COULD YOU SAY WHETHER THERE WILL BE SOMETHING

NEW?

PHICHAI: (DOES NOT ANSWER)

REPORTER: A QUESTION ASKED IS WHETHER WE WILL BE ABLE TO FILE CASES AGAINST THEM IN OUR CRIMINAL COURT, AND THAT IS WHAT THEY CONSIDER A MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE WHICH THEY CANNOT AGREE TO. IT IS BELIEVED THAT HE CAME TO MEET YOU TODAY ON THAT ISSUE. WILL HE BE WILLING FOR AMERICAN SERVICEMEN TO BE UNDER THAI JURISDICTION AND FOR CASES TO BE FILED AGAINST THEM IN THAI COURTS OF LAW?

PHICHAI: I WISH TO POINT OUT AND EMPHASIZE AGAIN THAT I ADHERE FIRMLY TO OUR SEVEN CONDITIONS. THEREFORE, THE ANSWER IS "NO," THAT IT WAS NOT THAT ISSUE.

REPORTER: WASN'T IT AN EXEMPTION DEMANDED IN REGARD TO THOSE SEVEN CONDITIONS?

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PHICHAI: A DEMAND WAS MADE TO THE FORMER GOVERNMENT, BUT IT REJECTED THE DEMAND THEY WANTED. THEREFORE, THAT SUBJECT WAS NOT EVEN MENTIONED DURING THE TALKS TODAY.

REPORTER: DOES THAT MEAN THERE ARE NEW DEVELOPMENTS ON THE ORIGINAL ISSUES?
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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 H-02

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P R 150448Z MAY 76
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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PHICHA: NO COMMENT.

REPORTER: WHEN DO YOU THINK HE WILL SEND THE MEMORANDUM TO YOU?

PHICHA: TODAY IS FRIDAY. HE MIGHT SEND ME THE
MEMORANDU ON TUESDAY OR WEDNESDAY.

REPORTER: SHOULD HE MAKE A PROPOSAL ON ANY MATTER ON
WHICH AGREEMENT COULD NOT BE REACHED IN THE PAST, WOULD
WE BE WILLING TO HOLD NEW NEGOTIATIONS?

PHICHA: IT IS A FACT THAT NO NEW NEGOTIATIONS ARE BEING
HELD WHATSOEVER. HE ONLY MADE A CALL ON ME. AFTER
A CONVERSATION ON OTHER SUBJECTS IN GENERAL, WE TALKED
ON THIS MATTER, AND DURING TALKS ON THIS MATTER WE EXCHANGED
VIEWS. WHILE EXCHANGING VIEWS, HE EXPRESSED NEW IDEAS WHICH
ARE OF INTEREST. THIS IS ALL I CAN SAY. SINCE HIS IDEAS
ARE OF INTEREST, I SAID THAT TO SUGGEST THEM ORALLY IS
NOT ACCEPTABLE, FOR HIM TO GO AND WRITE MEMORANDUM THAT
WOULD ENABLE ME TO STUDY ANYTHING OF INTEREST THOROUGHLY
AND CAREFULLY.

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REPORTER: WAS HIS OBJECTIVE IN EXPRESSING THESE NEW
IDEAS BECAUSE HE WANTS VARIOUS EQUIPMENT TO REMAIN HERE
IN THAILAND?

PHICHA: THERE ARE VARIOUS REASONS.

REPORTER: WHEN WILL YOU BE ABLE TO DISCLOSE THE CONTENTS
OF THE MEMORANDUM AFTER YOU HAVE RECEIVED IT?

PHICHA: IN NEGOTIATION OR TALKS I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO
DISCLOSE CONTENTS AT TIMES OR, IN SOME CASES, IF THE
DISCLOSURE WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT RESULTS HOPED FOR.
THAT, HOWEVER, DOES NOT MEAN THAT I CANNOT MEET MASS MEDIA
REPRESENTATIVES AT ALL.

REPORTER: SO HE WILL COME AND MEET YOU AGAIN SOME TIME

NEXT WEEK, BRINGING THE MEMORANDUM WITH HIM?

PHICHAJ: YES, SOME TIME NEXT WEEK. IT MIGHT BE TUESDAY OR WEDNESDAY.

REPORTER: FROM WHAT HE SAID TODAY, DO YOU THINK THAT NEGOTIATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE HELD, OR WILL YOU HAVE TO SUBMIT THE MATTER TO THE CABINET?

PHICHAJ: AFTER I HAVE THE MEMORANDUM IN HAND AND I HAVE STUDIED IT, IT SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE CABINET.

REPORTER: ARE THE SUGGESTIONS MADE BENEFICIAL TO THAILAND?

PHICHAJ: EVERYTHING THAT I AND MASS MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES DO MUST BE IN THE INTERESTS OF THAILAND.

REPORTER: DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SUGGESTIONS YOU HEARD THIS AFTERNOON ARE BENEFICIAL TO US?

PHICHAJ: YES.

REPORTER: FROM THE ANGLE OF MILITARY AFFAIRS AND OF ECONOMY?

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PHICHAJ: THEY SHOULD OBTAIN GOOD RESULTS FOR US FROM THE ANGLES OF ECONOMY, OF SECURITY, AND OF MILITARY AFFAIRS.

REPORTER: REGARDING HIS NEW IDEAS, DID HE COME AND PROPOSE GIVING US INCREASED AID IF RAMASUN REMAINS?

PHICHAJ: NO, NO. PLEASE DON'T STRESS THAT AGAIN. I WILL NEVER AGREE TO THAT. I ADHERE FIRMLY TO OUR SEVEN CONDITIONS THROUGHOUT.

REPORTER: WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL VIEW REGARDING AMERICAN MILITARY TECHNICIANS STILL REMAINING HERE. SHOULD THEIR NUMBER BE REDUCED TO ONLY 300 MEN ATTACHED TO JUSMAG?

PHICHAJ: HOW CAN THOSE TECHNICIANS BE ATTACHED TO JUSMAG AND REMAIN HERE UNDER THE 1950 AGREEMENT*

REPORTER: SUPPOSE THEY CHANGE FROM TECHNICIANS AND BECOME OFFICIALS ATTACHED TO JUSMAG?

PHICHAJ: THEY ARE NOT RELATED AT ALL. DON'T PUT WORDS INTO MY MOUTH. END TEXT
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